

## Ergonomics demonstration project: Government Agency

### Need

As an employer with 50 or more FTEs, the Washington State Department of Ecology needs to comply with the job analysis and awareness education component of the ergonomics rule by July 2003. Ergonomics staff from the Department of Labor and Industries met with Ecology's safety officers to invite their participation in a demonstration project.

### Goal

The goal of this project is to show that an employer can identify caution zone jobs without having ergonomic expertise. The project will demonstrate that the results are comparable when Ecology staff and L&I ergonomists identify caution zone jobs at Ecology.

### Project design

The Department of Ecology selected four jobs they considered to be of greatest concern: warehouse worker, accountant, Washington Conservation Corp worker, and laboratory worker.

L&I provided a training session for Ecology's safety officers and about a dozen supervisors and managers from the work areas to be evaluated. Training included how to identify caution zone job and hazard zone job risk factors, and practice exercises. L&I developed supplemental materials to help Ecology managers and supervisors assess caution zone jobs.

At the end of the training session, the trained group was asked to complete a caution zone jobs checklist for the specific job under their leadership. They were encouraged to reassess and revise them as necessary after observing actual work during the next week.

L&I ergonomics personnel will independently observe and assess the four types of jobs selected by Ecology. L&I will use Appendix B of the ergonomics rule to determine hazards in these jobs.

The project will compare the results of the assessments by Ecology and L&I ergonomics personnel. Ecology's safety officers will review L&I's hazard level assessment and apply it to subsequent caution zone jobs that they find. L&I and Ecology will work together to identify ways to control the hazards.

## Timetable

March 2001 .....	Initial demonstration project invitation made. Project scope discussions start.
July 2001 .....	Training material developed. Training provided for Ecology safety personnel and select managers/supervisors. Caution zone jobs assessment completed by Ecology.
Aug.–Oct. 2001 .....	L&I ergonomics personnel complete caution zone jobs assessment and Appendix B hazard level assessment of the four jobs.
December 2001 .....	Present the comparison results. Brief Ecology in Appendix B methods used for hazard level assessment of the identified caution zone jobs.

## Results

The project will:

- Compare the results of caution zone assessments by Ecology and L&I.
- Develop supplemental training materials.